

As a factor of the church the society needs courage. The world may assault us, dark clouds overshadow us, but with the courage of Paul may we face the enemy, fight the battle, and exalt the Christian banner.

"Would you be a hero in the fight,
Trust in God and do the right."

Let us not be Elijah's fleeing from some Jezebel, and hiding in the cave of fear; as God fed his servant by the brook, so he will provide for those who trust him.

The Sister's Society as a factor must be loyal. It is well to do Christian work abroad, but duty demands it first at home. Do not send your means and members elsewhere as long as they can accomplish more good at home, which is often the case. Every true loyal worker feels the words of the poet:

"I love thy kingdom Lord,
The house of Thine abode;
The church our blest Redeemer saved,
With his own precious blood."

When John the Baptist entered his great mission, the first requisite he deemed necessary was humility—an example we might well follow. He did not select a costly tabernacle, but instead the lonely forest in which to work; his subjects were not the rich, but the poor. He did not wish to baptize the Christ, but thought he had more need to be baptized of Him. John thought himself unworthy to unlace the Master's shoes. The woman who is proud and boastful, wins no friends and forfeits her influence for good. Humility will talk to the vilest sinner, and lead to the poorest home, just where the Christian is most needed.

Then the society can aid the church in a social way. The hearty hand shake and pleasant smile will do much. I have been made happy an entire day, by just a smile or kind word. Make the sinner feel that you are interested in him, and he will soon be in you; and thus he can be led into the fold. The pastor succeeds best who is most sociable—and this is true of the lay member as well.

As workers we may be limited, but we can use what means we have. Elijah used his rough coat to part the waters of the Jordan—all that he had, yet he accomplished his work. You may have a Jordan to cross, but instead of standing on the bank of fear and doubt, wondering and questioning how you are to cross, smite the waters with your rough mantle, and they will part for you as surely as they did for the prophet of old. Give God your confidence and he will not fail you in the hour of need.

The church can be aided by the holy influence of the sisters. Every minute, every hour, every year wields its influence for good on the part of one who is a sincere Christian. To whom would one cling more, or love more than a true woman.

The sisters no doubt labor under discouragements. They are compassed by those who give their work no encouragement, and

by those who reluctantly give them aid. Yet they fight the battle, and will in time face the world as conquerors. Their bright deeds are no doubt unnoticed by some, and their noble efforts unappreciated, but yet they continue to climb—although the path be thorny, the road dark, and the work at times irksome. It is said that Spurgeon's chief characteristic was a firm reliance upon God, and faith that kept its eye steady and saw a bright out-come to the darkest experiences. Once when asked how he expected to accomplish a great undertaking he had on hand he replied, "The Lord has not failed me yet, and why should I not trust him now."

"The path of sorrow and that alone,
Leads to the land where sorrow is unknown,
No traveler e'er saw that blest abode
Who found not thorns or briars on his road."

Your work as a Christian may not be just what you would wish it be. You can't be a Francis Willard or a Susan B. Anthony—the world has need of only a few of such women—but you can be an humble Dorcas or a devoted Ruth. On you rests the destiny of that boy or girl—you are to decide whether he or she shall lead a godly or a godless life. Fulfill your mission in the home, and Jesus will enter it as surely as he did the little home at Bethany bringing brightest cheer and sublimest comfort. Joan of Arc did her work in her place, do your work in your place, whether it be in the home or elsewhere; and the Father of heaven who seeth in secret shall reward you openly; and when you are treading down life's hill, and when life's golden sun is setting in the western sky, beautified by the clouds of faith, hope and charity, the Heavenly messenger will sweep down from heaven's heights, kiss your careworn cheek, light you on his wings, and bear you to the God for whom you shall have so nobly labored.

Our Young People

A PRECIOUS INVITATION

Matt. 11 : 25-30

Topic for Jan. 8, 1899.

As soon as sin defiled the heart of man he fled from God and feared his presence. But God came seeking at once and saying "where art thou?" This first scene in the primitive garden pictures the condition of things ever since. Men have given themselves over to selfish pleasures and naturally avoid anything that condemns them. But God's love follows and woos them back. Invitation after invitation he has given to them to return to him and be healed. Prophet after prophet he has sent to warn them. Mercy after mercy and judgment after judgment, all have done their work. The gracious spirit constantly strives and all that divine love and power can do is being done to constrain men to seek the kingdom of God. The two classes of people, the good and the bad, or the sheep and the goats, or the elect and the non-elect are simply the "whosoever wills" and "whosoever won'ts." The precious invitation is extended to all and the way is easy and plain. The most blessed promises are those which assure us of strength to do our part so that God may do his. The world is weary because the yoke of sin is hard. There is rest under the yoke of Christ because it is easy and constantly grows more blessed.

THE PRECIOUS INVITATION

1. From whom.—The Father, John 6 : 44. The

son, Matt. 11 : 28-30. The Spirit, the church and whosoever heareth, Rev. 22 : 17.

2. To what.—Life, John 10 : 10. Holiness, I Thess. 4 : 7. Blessing, Num. 10 : 29. Liberty, Gal. 5 : 13. Fellowship, I Cor. 1 : 9; I Pet. 2 : 9-11. To work, Matt. 11 : 30. The marriage supper of the Lamb Rev. 19 : 7-9.

3. To whom.—The sinful, Isa. 1 : 18; Matt. 9 : 13. The backslidden, Jer. 3 : 12, 13, 22. The poor, Luke 14 : 21, 22. The weary, Matt. 11 : 28-30. The thirsty, Isa. 51 : 1; John 7 : 37.

4. Conditions of coming, Matt. 16 : 24; John 14 : 23.

5. Harden not your heart, Heb. 3 : 8.

6. The final invitation, Matt. 25 : 34

OPEN PARLIAMENT

1. Are God's invitations all precious? Why?
2. Why is this invitation (Matt. 11 : 29, 30) specially precious?

3. How may we come to Christ? Rev. 3 : 20.

4. How can there be rest in taking up a yoke?

5. Does Christ help us when weary physically? How?

6. What wrong way do many use in seeking rest and why is it wrong? Amos 6 : 1.

7. How may we make the most of this precious invitation for ourselves and for the world?

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THE MESSAGE OF THE NEW YEAR

J. R. MILLER

What is the message of the New Year for young people? Does it not call them to new life? No one should be content to live any year just as well as the previous year. An earnest life is always reaching forward to better things. Every young person who is truly alive and awake has heart and brain full of beautiful dreams for the year now opening.

There are some definite things in the message which comes to the young at the New Year. A mere vague intention to make the year better than the last is not of much worth; it is apt to fade out in fruitless sentiments without anything to show that it ever was in the mind. We would better come down to something practical.

For example, character. There is no young person who may not discover one or more faults in himself, if he is fairly diligent in making the search and fairly honest in confessing them. Some one has said that we should count that day happy in which we discover a fault in ourselves—happy, not because the fault is there, but because we are made aware of it. There is only one thing to do if we are truly striving to grow into the best life—we must cast out every discovered fault.

The best way to displace is to replace. If we would keep the plucked up weed from growing again, we should plant a flower in its place in the garden. When we cast out the discovered fault, we should get a virtue, an excellence, something beautiful and worthy, into the empty place. St. Paul talks about putting off certain sinful things and then putting on certain graces, as one would change one's garments. We should resolve to put on this New Year the garments of righteousness. St. Peter gives us a list of good things to add to our character: "Add to your faith, virtue; and to virtue, knowledge; and to knowledge, temperance; and to